

CT Against Gun Violence

P.O. Box 523 Southport, CT 06890
tel: 203-955-1009
www.cagv.org

Testimony to the Judiciary Committee
Ron Pinciario, Executive Director

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CT Against Gun Violence supports Raised Bill No. 6676, AAC IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT LONGEVITY INITIATIVE ON A STATE-WIDE BASIS

CT Against Gun Violence enthusiastically endorses Raised Bill No. 6676 as it should help to provide support to Project Longevity. This initiative, originally initiated by Governor Malloy as Focused Deterrence, has the opportunity to become the most successful statewide gun violence prevention program Connecticut has ever experienced and could become a template for other states to use as well. Focused Deterrence was renamed Project Longevity after receiving federal endorsement following a visit from U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder.

The project had its start and initial success in the City of New Haven and has since begun expansion into the cities of Hartford and Bridgeport. In a typical year, nearly 75% of Connecticut firearm homicides happen in the three largest cities of Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven. The choice to implement this work in these cities first was an obvious one.

The program, as announced, has at its core three basic premises:

1. A small and manageable group of individuals, often with ties to local gangs, are known to be the most likely perpetrators, or victims, of gun violence. These known individuals are already under the supervision of probation and parole officers and well known to police and prosecutors.
2. In addition to closely monitoring the activities of this group, the program will also initiate reentry programs such as job training and other programs to provide better alternatives for the group.
3. All members of the community - parents, clergy, neighborhood leaders - everyone working toward one goal is necessary for the program to achieve the success expected. The communities must come together and demand that the level of urban gun violence is unacceptable and must be a top priority of law enforcement.

In its first full year, the program has had outstanding success. New Haven firearm homicides have dropped from 29 in 2011 to 18 in 2012; in the same period, Hartford's have dropped from 29 to 20. Bridgeport, the last of the three cities to institute the initiative, had a slight increase from 17 to 18. The result was a net reduction of homicides in the three cities by 25.3%. Early results for 2013 are even more encouraging in all three cities.

The success has occurred without substantial resources supplied from the federal government to this point. With better funding, it is entirely reasonable to expect even better results.

Every effort should be made, including the action suggested by this measure requiring the Office of Policy and Management to insure continued implementation of this program on a statewide basis, must be encouraged. The plan is a sound one. What is needed now is forceful execution.

CT Against Gun Violence is committed to provide any help sought to make this a successful initiative.

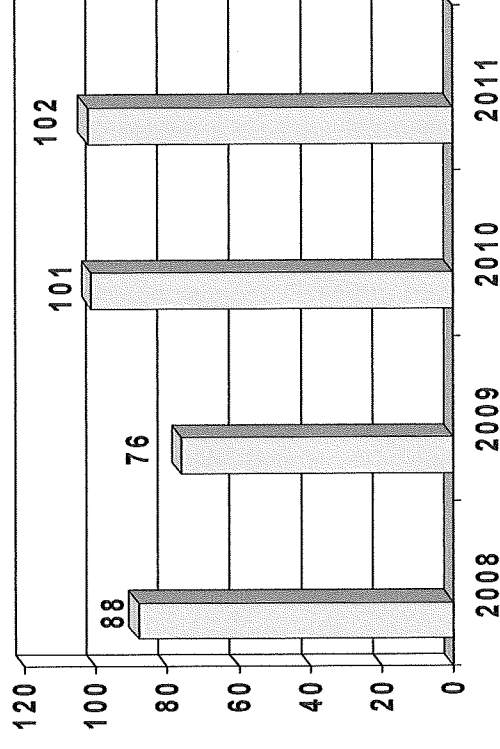
CT Firearm Homicides

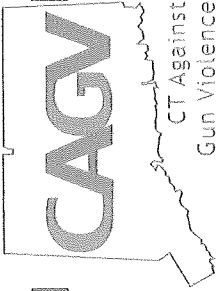
CT Firearm homicides have been on the increase recently.

1. Of the 367 gun homicides in CT during the four years of 2008-2011, 269 (73.3%) occurred in our three largest cities: Hartford, New Haven, and Bridgeport.

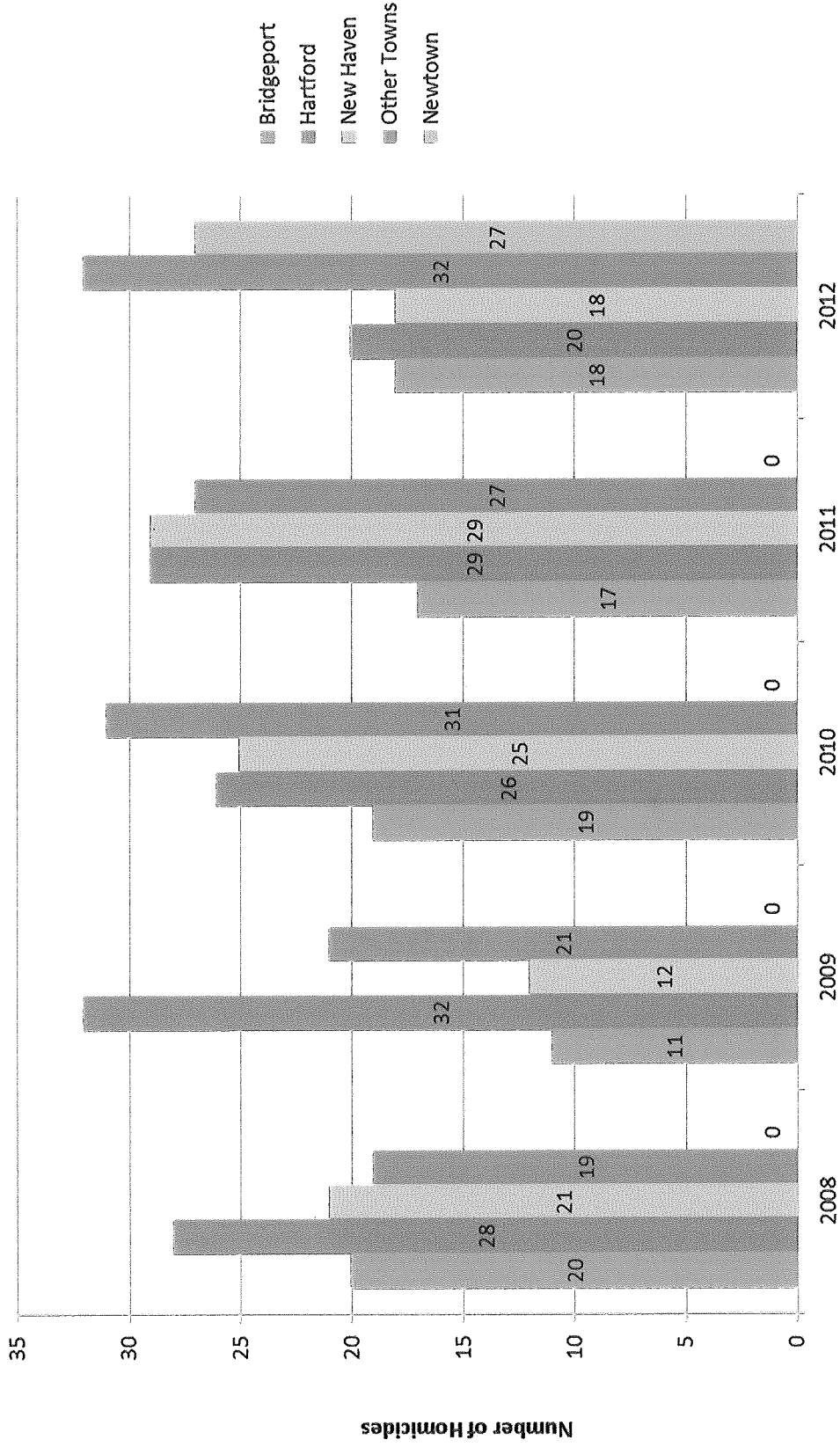
2. 84.3% of the victims were Black or Hispanic.

3. Most of these crimes are committed by people who are prohibited from owning guns.





Gun homicide Primarily affects cities



Source: Office of the Medical Examiner

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